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ABSTRACT

The most pressing business for those segments of the Christian community interested in the university is to develop some fresh and current theological understanding of the university that will take account of the peculiar nature of the academy and place the university in the context of a world theology. This discussion of a theology of the university has four parts: (1) a historical perspective; (2) the evolution of the university; (3) the university as the city of human hope (futurism, freedom, commitment, and critical reflection); and (4) the connection in the different purposes of the church and the university. (HSE)

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# THE UNIVERSITY AS THE CITY OF HUMAN HOPE

Joseph C. Hough, Jr.

## Introduction

Discussions of the university today are being carried on at a number of levels. There is a continuing interest in the history of the university and a fair amount of discussion about its purpose, particularly in light of the politicizing of universities in Latin America, Europe, and the Soviet Union. However, the most pressing business for those segments of the Christian community interested in the university is to develop some fresh and current theological understanding of the university which will take account of the peculiar nature of the academy and at the same time place the university in the context of a worldly theology, the beginning of which is the acknowledgement of the creative power of God as the source of all worldly phenomena.[1]

In the discussion of a theology of the university I hope to accomplish two goals simultaneously. On the one hand, as a member of the university community, I shall attempt to make some contribution to the university's self-understanding by suggesting a focal point for its life and purpose. On the other hand, I hope to sketch the contours of a theological understanding of the university for the church. In fact, these are not really separate tasks, for the most appropriate contribution that the theologian can make to the discussion of the purpose of the university is that which he or she can contribute from the center of his or her discipline. It is at the same time a contribution to the ongoing dialogue in the church about our common understanding of the world.

My reflection will focus in four areas. In the first place, I shall recall some of the theological images of the university which have been employed in the past. Secondly, I shall then trace the recent evolution of the university, especially in the United States. Thirdly, I shall offer some suggestions for a new theological understanding of the university as the city of human hope. And I shall conclude with some reflections on the relationship of the church to the university.

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## I. The Theology of the University in Historical Perspective

The church has always had a profound interest in the university. Although the church has on occasion stifled the university and circumscribed its freedom, the university as we know it today owes its beginning to the protection of farsighted medieval churchmen.[2] Much the

same is true of American universities as well. In fact if we limit ourselves to the United States, we could rightly conclude that the beginnings of the university in this nation revolved around the church's need for educated clergy. Harvard and William and Mary, our earliest universities, were established for the purpose of educating ministers so that we should not have ignoramuses in the pulpit. However, there was no unanimity about this. There were those who thought that education was the enemy of inspiration and that an educated clergy was not likely to be a godly clergy. A Christian college to them was a contradiction in terms.[3] The controversy which raged at that time led the founders of Harvard to argue for various theological understandings of the university which had emerged in the Christian tradition. George H. Williams has explored the concern of Harvard's founders in some detail and he demonstrates that there were at least five themes in the theological idea of the university which emerged in the Christian tradition at least as early as medieval times.[4]

1. The first was the critical theme. By this is meant that the university had relative autonomy and coordinate authority with the church and the state. It was an important correction to the church's dogmatism and also to the pretensions of the state. Though closely related to the church by virtue of their common pursuit of truth, the university would stand in its own right ordained of God through natural truth and was not to be controlled by the clergy.

2. The christological theme. Here the church, the state, and the university were seen in relation to the threefold office of Christ as prophet, priest, and king. The role of the university was identified with the prophetic office, which in early Christian literature was seen to be a teaching office. The role of the state was identified with a kingly office, and the role of the church with a priestly office. Only Jesus Christ was competent to exercise all three of these offices and no more than one was to be vested in any other human entity.[5] As Pope Gregory put it, "If of the middle (the university) the other two are deprived, they fall into extreme corruption, because power, unless it is tempered by wisdom, luxuriates in in presumption and gives itself over to arrogance, while benignity, too, if it is unsupported by knowledge, becomes amorphously degenerate and rendered akin to fatuousness."[6]

3. The transferential theme. By this is meant that the universities stood in direct succession to the academies of antiquity and individual figures throughout history through whom God had transferred learning from the ancients to medieval times. Under God's providence the light of knowledge passed from generation to generation by God's chosen agents. The university of the Middle Ages, then, was seen as a providential guardian of wisdom and an instrument through which wisdom was to be borne to future generations.[7]

4. The community of scholars was seen composed of those disciplined against worldly pursuits and dedicated exclusively to the pursuit of knowledge. They thus became the instruments whereby faith and reason were integrated in such a way as to heal the disease of human knowledge occasioned by the fall and to preserve human knowledge from fragmentation and distortion. This theme is called the paradisic theme and was particularly evident among monastic communities who devoted themselves to scholarship.[8]

5. The university was viewed as a community of learned soldiers of Christ who warred for truth against error. Here the necessary discipline of the academic community was viewed as a special kind of spiritual warfare. Since Christ was the truth and the university was a community of truth, academics were actually soldiers of Christ called to fight in his cause. This warfare was not only of service to the truth of nature as such, but was on occasion related to the paradisic theme and viewed as a redemptive warfare.[9]

II. The Evolution of the University

All of these theological ideas of the university presupposed that institutions of higher learning were in the service of Christian faith even if, on occasion, they were made autonomous. The overwhelming majority of the professors in the medieval universities were clergymen, and it was everywhere assumed that theology was queen of the sciences, perfecting, and for the most part, correcting the other disciplines. Such conceptions were rooted in a "Christianized society" and could not long survive the collapse of that peculiar order. As a result, the images of the university spawned in that context were on their way out of usage by the sixteenth century and by the time John Henry Cardinal Newman wrote his essays in the 1850s the university was seen as a context of learning in which the pursuit of knowledge was pressed independently of faith though never apart from theology as a discipline.[10]

What happened to the university and where is it today? These questions occupied the mind of Sir Walter Moberly in England during the late 1930s and early 1940s.[11] As part of his investigation Moberly traced the history of the university and identified several stages through which the university has passed.

In the first place, he points to the university of Cardinal Newman to which I have already made reference. Newman, in his book, The Idea of the University, defined the university as the institution in which "liberal" education took place. The education was liberal in the sense that knowledge was pursued for its own sake and not to support faith and make Christians of the students. The work of the mind was the proper function of human beings not because it served any function of utility or even provided the possibility for greater morality, but simply because the work of the mind was the proper end of human beings. Even though Newman felt that such liberal education had to be in constant dialogue with theology and was quite conscious of the fact that in traditional Thomistic theology the perfection of the world and of humankind would be complete only by virtue of theological gifts of grace and of the spirit, he nonetheless was careful to separate the purpose of the university from that of the church. Newman thought that the purpose of the university was to instill in the students a liberal "habit of mind." This habit of mind, which would last through life, possessed the attributes of "freedom, equitableness, calmness, moderation, and wisdom."[12]

There was no room in this conception of the university for a high degree of specialization. In fact, Newman felt that research should be done outside the university. The knowledge in the university was to be of a general kind and it was also to be systematic. The goal of Newman's conception of the educational system was not to accumulate a great deal of factual material, but rather to be able to order and structure material into some understanding of the world and of humankind.

A second shift in the understanding of the university took place when Wilhelm von Humboldt became chancellor of the University of Berlin in the early 1900s. Von Humboldt's idea of the university was characterized by the freedom of the professor to pursue subjects without any censorship or control and without any inhibitions on his or her research. It was also characterized by the freedom of the students to pursue those studies that seemed to them to be of interest and appropriate. Learning was done for learning's sake. Investigation really mattered more than instruction, however, and the advancement of knowledge far more than communication. The university in that stage was totally independent of the church and the state and viewed itself as a community of detachment. No dogmatism was permissible, and as one observer put it, "the only fanaticism permissible was the fanaticism of veracity."[13] In this conception of the university the priority was clearly on research and the training of graduate researchers to carry on the tasks of the masters. Whereas for Newman, the model was the Oxford of his day, the operational model for this notion of the university was the German university in the early twentieth century.

It is obvious from an address of Dean DeVane of Yale[14] at Louisiana State University in 1957 that a combination of these perceptions or ideas of the university was still dominant in the United States even in the late fifties. It still permeates much of the discussion surrounding the idea of the university today.

Both these ideas of the university have been superseded by what Moberly called the technological-democratic understanding of the university. The primary forces at work in this changing conception were the rise of applied sciences and technology and the growing democratization of the universities. At the point of scholarly methodology, the impact of the new scientific culture made its most profound mark. That methodology was empirical, analytic, and deliberately selective. It required a large-scale organization and cooperative work for its investigations. The old ideal of the scholarly recluse working alone with his books and ideas was out of date. What is more, the clientele of students who attended the university became quite different from that of nineteenth-century Oxford and Cambridge.

Moberly concludes that there is no single idea of the university which is really dominant today. Remnants of Newman, von Humboldt, and the new ideas of the university abound. This led Moberly to suggest that we have entered a very chaotic stage in the development of the idea of the university in which we know little of its unity, purpose, or commitment.[15]

Clark Kerr, in his book The Uses of the University,[16] suggests another conception of the university which he says is more distinctly American. It is the idea of the university as the servant of society.[17] This emerged with the Morrill Act in 1862 which, in addition to initiating the land grant college movement, established the principle that the American university was not only a place for the education of a leadership elite in liberal studies nor was it only a place to carry on graduate studies, research, and training of the three "great professions, law, medicine, and divinity." Rather, the university became an educational institution which would serve all segments of the society. The Morrill Act brought schools of agriculture and home economics into the university. These were shortly followed by schools of nursing, business administration, and a wide variety of other professional and semiprofessional schools. This had the effect of expanding the services of the university to the general public as well as democratizing it.

This notion of the university as a servant of society was developed further during the administration of Charles Van Hise, president of the University of Wisconsin from 1903 to 1918. At this time the university began to involve itself as an active participant in the political processes. Research was done on public policy questions in support of reform movements. Specifically, the university put its enormous research resources at the disposal of the trade union movement. Furthermore, the extension education movement began in earnest, and the university proceeded out of the cloister, off the campus into the whole of society.[18] In its most practical sense, extension education was the university serving society par excellence.[19]

Kerr concludes that there is support for all these conceptions of the university in the discussions of the nature and purpose of university education, the role of the university in society, and the relationship of the university to political processes. The arguments vary from person to person under the pressure of practical questions, but he concludes that in most universities all three of the perceptions still exist side by side. As he put it in reference to the history of Harvard University, President Lowell tried to make the university as British as possible for the sake of the undergraduates, President Elliott tried to make the university as German as possible for the sake of the graduates and the research personnel, and President Conant tried to make it as American as possible for the sake of the public at large. And Kerr adds, cryptically, that the university president today tries to keep all this as <u>confused as possible</u> for the sake of the preservation of the whole uneasy balance.[20]

For Moberly, the university is chaotic. For Kerr it is confused or muddled. In both cases, representatives of the most able educational leaders in Britain and the U.S. raise serious questions about the viability of the university today. There is growing fragmentation and a sense of isolation and purposelessness among the members of the community of the university. In some cases, perhaps most cases, the university today is little more than a congeries of specialists, departments, institutes, and interests bound together by a budget, a central library, a development department, and some elementary rules and procedures for professorial advancement. The primary problem of the university in America today, then, is not an oppressive church or state, but its own inner confusion. The real question for us now is whether a coherent understanding of the university is even possible.

III. The University as the City of Human Hope

In light of this, why should the university be called the city of hope? It seems to be anything but that. This question really has two aspects. The first is the question as to why the <u>university</u> is the city of human hope rather than some other institution. In my view in spite of its difficulties the university remains the city of human hope because traditionally the things human that are really important for the whole of our life together are the subject of the university's reflection and discussion. No other institution is equipped or so obviously suited by its nature and function to embrace a universal spectrum of concerns about what it is to be a human being in community and in the world about us. Human hope emerges from disciplined reflection about our most cherished heritages and artifacts, as well as our probing of our most lofty cultural and personal aspiration. Whatever else the university is today, it does remain in part the home of what Dean DeVane of Yale called "the liberating studies," the religion,

philosophy, history, aesthetics, literature, and music, which are the gropings of each generation of human spirits toward higher standards of excellence for human life together.[21] Surely this is a context in which hope can emerge.

The second aspect of the question has to do with the appropriateness of the new metaphor, the city of human hope. Why move from the "community in pursuit of truth" to the "city of human hope"?

Part of the answer to that question lies in the confusion and chaos to which I have referred. The vaunted freedom in pursuit of truth has been corrupted by an individualistic understanding of research and disciplines. This has resulted in a license to pursue anything and everything at the whim of the researcher or the beckon of the donor.[22] Moreover, the triumph of relativism has made the notion of truth problematical. When license and relativism are joined, the result is the loss of community, because pursuing truth "for me" alone undermines any sense of common life.

More important, however, is the appropriateness of the metaphor "the city of human hope" to the university. For one thing, the Greek word πόλις (city) is from the same root as πολίτευμα, which is defined as membership in a community interacting for a common good. This is very similar to the liberal understanding of membership in the university community to which I have already referred and keeps faith with that tradition.

Second, the university is a human city. Seeing it as such lends realism to the metaphor. We should not immediately have too great expectations for the university. The university will reflect the peculiarly human nature of all human creations. It will also be contextually human, that is, it will reflect the state of human understanding in a particular time and in a particular place. Since there appears to be no emerging consensus about values, religion, national priorities, and the nature of education in the human community at large, it is not surprising that the universities we have created reflect the same problems.

As a human creation, an artifact of civilization, the university is also a temporal, changing institution. It is not ultimate. The death of some universities is to be expected as is the death of all universities in the final analysis.

Not only is the reference to the university as a city of hope appropriate to the nature and traditions of the university, it is an appropriate metaphor for our times. The notion of hope has assumed tremendous importance for the theological and secular community, because of the profound tendency to despair over the human prospect that is becoming increasingly characteristic of our common life. This pessimism has issued partly from the Second World War. The two events which shook human expectations most severely were the Holocaust and the dropping of the atomic bomb. As a result of these two events we have an entire generation of people who live with the clear memory of the loss of hope by a whole people, but they live also with the knowledge that the end of history has become a concrete possibility.

Moreover, the spectre of worldwide population growth, the scarcity of basic raw materials, and the developing arms race for an advantage in the balance of terror are constantly battering

the consciousness of sensitive souls, while the rise of repressive governments and internecine warfare give the lie to claims of progress in the development of human sensitivity or human institutions.

What is emerging, then, at its most profound level is the loss of hope, and this malaise reaches into every human institution and affects its life.

In the midst of this situation, I suggest that an appropriate theological understanding of the university is the idea of the university as a city of human hope. In doing so, I do not suggest that the university is in fact a city of human hope even as it never was the recovery of the lost paradise or the community of Christ's soldiers. When I refer to the university as a city of hope, I do so in the context of the Christian doctrine of creation. This means that we speak of the divine intent for the university, the understanding of the university by the One who understands it better than it understands itself. My suggestion is that God created the university as a city of human hope. The purpose of the university understood in this theological context is to create and project visions of a new human community.

It is important to note that the university is not called upon to create new communities. It is rather called to a more fundamental and continuing enterprise, that of reflecting on what constitutes human life and community. But it is not to the reflection alone that the university devotes itself. For the fruit of the life of the mind is the projection of new possibilities and new visions. Never should a university simply be the custodian of the knowledge it pursues. It should ever be the bearer of knowledge to the world for the sake of the world. By this, I do not mean to resort to any utilitarian concept of the university. Cardinal Newman's ghost would haunt my dreams if I succumbed to this temptation. On the contrary, the university for the sake of the world does not mean that the university is at the disposal of the world to do what is useful or safe or necessary in the eyes of other more powerful worldly institutions. The university for the sake of the world means, in the context of the doctrine of creation, that the university is what it is in response to the same God who created the world. It is in harmony with the divine creative intent. Therefore, the university is for the sake of the world precisely because in being what it is called to be it is serving the divine creative intention for the whole world. That is its creative and <u>moral</u> task.

If the university is the city of human hope, and as such is the locus of reflection upon and projection of visions of new possibilities for human community, certain things will follow.

1. In the first place, the task of the university is the task of hoping. As a community of hope the university projects visions of a new world. The university as a community of human hope will be working toward a single vision of the world but as a community of human hope we know that a plurality of visions will be at stake. What we mean here is not the university's concern with political reform which has been characteristic of American universities since the early 1920s. Rather we mean here concern with a broad vision of human social possibility. Perhaps the best way to make the distinction between hope and reform at this point is to utilize Amitai Etzioni's distinction between bit decisions and contextuating decisions. Bit decisions according to Etzioni are incremental decisions that are made on a continuing basis and usually result in small adjustments of policies which have been decided. Over a long period of time a series

of bit decisions may result in such a radical change in the original policy direction that it is no longer recognizable. However, such policy changes are ad hoc and unintentional and usually add to confusion rather than effectiveness. In contrast, contextuating decisions have to do with a projection of a broad vision of a totally new direction for social policy.[23]

The most recent example of such a contextuating vision in American life was the "New Deal" of Franklin Roosevelt, which signaled a recognizable and comprehensive departure from past social patterns and the creation of new institutional structures for social order and economic distribution.

We desperately need a new vision of social order and economic distribution today. That new vision must be global rather than national, for the day of the independent nation-state as the fundamental conceptual model of the human community is giving way to the model of international interdependence. The signs emerging are not only the obvious moral ones such as a new consciousness of our common humanity and an affirmation of basic universal human rights and support for human liberation, but also a renewed understanding of our interdependence with nonhuman life and even the soil, water, air, and other resources of our planet. The sources of this new emerging consciousness are climatologists, chemists, physicists, biologists, philosophers, and theologians. They all alike have seen the signs and have given notice of our need for something beyond the cacophony of warning--a vision that is global in every sense of the word. What is at stake is not only the future of any semblance of human life but also, perhaps, the survival of the world as we know it.

In light of this, any educational institution which is not organizing itself to contribute to the creation and projection of visions of hope is not worthy of the name university. If the university is a place where reflection about things that really matter to the human community is to go on, projection of global vision and the modeling of liberating global consciousness is its primary task.

Some will object that such a centered discussion will deflect the intellectual energies of the university community from its primary task of research.[24] It is true that the deployment of resources for this central task may well result in a decrease in emphasis on what some would call "pure research" for its own sake in the university. While I do not choose to deprecate "pure research" in the tradition of von Humboldt, I do not think it can be the primary task of the university today.[25] Furthermore, research, no matter how pure and disinterested, which has life-destroying potential should be eliminated from the university entirely.

2. In the second place, the city of hope is a city of freedom. There can be no hope unless we are free to pursue new possibilities at the expense of old established forms. Hope is for tomorrow, not yesterday. And even though our hope always is nourished by the past, it always has its eyes on the future. As Ernst Bloch put it, hope is systematic reflection on how what is can become what is not yet.

This emphasis on freedom does not mean that a proper theological understanding of the university is identical to the notion of lehrfreiheit or freedom of the professor characteristic of von Humboldt's Berlin or its children. The university is not free to do everything with impunity. It is free to be the city of hope.

Here great care needs to be taken. The freedom of the university, as I have said, has been dangerously perverted by an individualistic laissez-faire notion of freedom which has led to a loss of community and purpose. The tragedy of this development really lies in the fact that the community no longer talks to itself at all about what its purpose and tasks are. The absence of this ongoing discussion has left a vacuum. In America, government and private industry, utilizing money and regulatory power, have usurped the true freedom of the university in many cases so that the university is not free to be itself but free only to be what it is paid to do. In Communist countries an even greater danger is present. Doctrinaire Marxists impose on the university the vision of the future it must serve and make it a slave to Communist party aims. Against these kinds of tyranny the university can best protect itself by projecting its own vision and becoming a community of serious discourse about things that matter. It is important that the discussions about the shape of hope as well as the internal dialogue about the university's task be characterized by complete freedom from any political, doctrinal, or "schools of thought" tests. The danger in a community of visionaries is always the danger of premature closure so that "my vision" or "today's vision" is proposed as the vision. In this case the city of human hope is transformed surreptitiously into the kingdom of power. The discussion of ideas becomes a warefare of ideologies the end result of which is the loss of freedom.[26] That, of course, means in the long haul a loss of hope as well. Today's new future is tomorrow's straightjacket. The life of the city of hope must be the life of freedom.

3. The city of hope is the community of commitment, for hope that is not committed to the vision it projects is mere fantasy or daydreaming. When one dares to become part of the city of human hope, one takes the risk of engaging others in the discussion of things that really matter for human life. This means that one is exposed to the necessity of betting one's life on new, untested human possibilities with all the dangers which that implies. In a community of freedom, one's commitments may be exposed as unworthy of disciplined consideration or as being founded on hidden and unexamined presuppositions. But this is precisely the risk that hoping implies. It implies the launching of visions of hope in a world that is cynical about visions and hopes. It implies the effort to call human beings to loftier aspirations at the risk of being made to look foolish for the effort.

I am aware of the fact that there are those who see a problem for traditional and necessary academic detachment and objectivity when heavy emphasis is placed on commitment. This is a very dubious objection. By now it is clear that there is no such thing as pure objectivity, not even in the natural sciences. The most that can be hoped for in discreet disciplines is critical distance from cherished hypotheses so that the evidence is skewed as little as possible. That is supplied only in critical dialogue as we shall see later. Furthermore, it is not possible to accomplish the task of hoping with any integrity if there is no willingness to hope with conviction.

In a community of human hope, we can neither stand aside from the discussion of the future, nor can we treat it lightly or tentatively. We "think with our lives" when the context of our thinking together has life and death implications for the future of humankind. A community of human hope is not a place where whimsical notions are floated as trial balloons, only to burst at the first touch of an inquisitive hand. The city of human hope is a place where we launch

our most cherished possessions--our visions of new personal possibilities and new life together. The city of human hope is the company of the committed doing battle against despair. As such like the milites christi of old, we risk our lives on the presumption that what we pursue and proffer is true. With this kind of commitment, the citizens of the university will feel impelled to share his or her hopes with those outside. Therefore, not only is commitment necessary for the inner life of the university, but it is also the force which will propel the university into the public arena in a continuous movement of reflection, projection, and discussion. In this way the university becomes a bearer of vision to and for the world and thus becomes what it is as a community of human hope.

4. In the previous discussion of commitment and freedom, I pointed to the risk of having one's presuppositions exposed as false and one's conclusions as being foolish. I also referred to the danger of premature closure of the discussion of visions of new human community. Considerations like these lead me to suggest, in the fourth place, that the method of the city of human hope is critical reflection. At the outset we should be clear that critical reflection is precisely that and not some sort of harping negativism. The presupposition of criticism is reflection, and one ought not to be critical unless one is reflective about the view being criticized.[27]

This is an argument that the speech of the city of human hope is dialogical, speaking and hearing; and that the accent on hearing is probably more important than the accent on speaking in a community of self-styled experts.

One of my fondest memories of H. R. Niebuhr as a teacher bears this out. In my first year at Yale Divinity School I had written a paper attacking an author in the most extravagant terms. I concluded that what he said was almost nonsensical, and of little value for the ongoing enterprise of Christian ethics. In his response Niebuhr chided me gently by reminding me that any book is a work of love and my first task was to hear--really hear--what the author was trying to say. "When you have really tried to hear and understand, you have earned the right to be critical." And he could have added, "When you are ready to expose yourself to criticism, you have earned the right to be critical."

The critical reflection of the city of hope is, as Barth put it, "mutual speech and hearing." In that community we have a right to hear what the other believes to matter for human life together. We also have the obligation to speak the truth about ourselves and our visions because the community has a right to hear from us.[28] And we have the obligation to speak the truth to others about what we hear from them without triviality or rancor. We have a moral obligation to pursue our vision together.

The purpose of all this critical reflection is the clarification and refinement of the vision of the city of human hope of and for the world and the preservation of the seriousness and freedom of the discourse within that city.

If the dialogical style is to flourish, the city of human hope must operate under what H. D. Aiken has called "the principle of reconsideration."[29] By this Aiken means that where two reasonable persons of good will reach conflicting conclusions (in this case about moral

principles), then the only further rational procedure to follow is for both to reconsider their conclusions in light of any new and pertinent facts or relevant information. Beyond this, critical reflection cannot bring agreement, but surely the community of human hope is a place where the discussion will go on. The deployment of the principle of reconsideration insures the continuity of the task.

In summary then I have suggested that the university is a city of human hope created by God for the sake of the world. Its life must be characterized by freedom, its citizens by commitment, and its process must be critical. As a creation of God, it is called to be this--nothing more and nothing less. Furthermore, I have suggested that the university as the city of hope is the community of serious and free discussion about the things that really matter for the future of humanity and the world. This image affirms some of the highest aspirations of Newman, von Humboldt, and Van Hise and joins them in a unified contextual understanding of the reality and possibilities for university life today.

Practically what this means is that the theological understanding of the university calls for a conscious pursuit by the university community of a sense of purpose. The chemist is not just a chemist, the philosopher is not just a philosopher, and no level of individual excellence fulfills the obligations of citizenship in the city of hope. Rather conscious participation in a "centering discussion" of the life of the community is the minimum to be expected of the good citizen,[30] and considerations for employment, rank, and tenure should reflect this expectation. I hope that discussion will give a new life to the university and new hope and confidence to the world at large. Such a sense of purpose and worth embracing the entire university community would surely lend a new sense of joy to the intellectual tasks.

As a Christian member of the university community, my joy is compounded when I am able to attain on rare occasions to the understanding of my life in the university as worthwhile not merely because of projecting and refining visions of human hope, but also participating in the work of God in Jesus Christ of making human life in this world more fully human. This profoundly personal experience of being a creative partner in the work of God in the world transforms, momentarily, the daily task in the university into occasions for praise to the One who called me to be who I am where I am for the sake of God's own creative purpose in the world.

## IV. The Church and the University

As we have seen, historically the purposes of the church and the university have been viewed as similar in many respects. However, the church is not the university nor is the university the church.[31] The church serves the university best by being the church. I have tried to indicate the nature and purpose of the university from my own theological perspective. In so doing I have been arguing implicitly that the university best serves the world, the church, and the purposes of God by being precisely what it is created to be, namely the university. I want now to indicate briefly the way in which the church serves the university by being the church.

The purpose of the church is proclamation of the truth of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. That proclamation, though it is by the church, is always first a self-address. Otherwise the proclamation of the gospel would be unspeakable arrogance. Therefore, when I speak of the

church's service to the university, I could also at once speak of the church's service to its own institutional life in much the same terms.

Having said that, the first thing that the church proclaims is the judgment of God upon our sins and pretensions. This means that the church will ever be critical of human institutions as they organize and affect human life. We have already seen that the university is not what it was created to be. As such, like all human institutions, its life is fragmented and weighed down by a history of arrogance, pride, and sloth. It is time for the churches to emphasize their critical interest in the university, not to control the universities, but to challenge them to be what they can be. At least, the churches should press the issue of the purpose of the university with their own institutions and they can also inspire committed Christians in other university contexts to begin some efforts at a "centering discussion" on visions of human hope for the future.

A second aspect of the proclamation of the gospel is what Karl Barth has called the "essence of the gospel," the forgiveness of sins. The proclamation of the gospels' word of forgiveness of sins is at once a word of freedom from the past and a promise of freedom for the future. It is the word that all things can and will be made new. The forgiveness of sins speaks to a future in which the university can move beyond what it is now and become what it is not yet. As unmanageable as it is; as entrenched and conservative as it is; the university is proclaimed free for a new future for itself. If the church believes this gospel, it will not despair of the university. Rather the church will support the university in becoming what it is created to be in the full confidence that the university is in the service of God by being itself.

Thirdly, the proclamation of the gospel by the church is the assurance that the church will give support to the university in its claim for the free and critical life as necessary in the pursuit of truth in the church as well as out. A vital church proclaiming a gospel that clearly judges the sinfulness of all humanity is the strongest possible guarantee for academic freedom. If all are sinners, no imposed truth can be final truth. Therefore any attempt to impose truth on other persons or institutions will be attacked with vigor by the church. Under the gospel we are free to be wrong, and we cannot pretend to any assurance that our human formulations of truth are final or salvific. Since the salvation of the world, therefore, cannot depend upon our ability to formulate truth in the church, we can, with a great deal of freedom, entertain a variety of proposals for truth, and we can support those institutions whose life is dedicated to the discussion, criticism, and refinement of various proposals for the future of humankind together.

Finally, the proclamation of the gospel by the church is characterized by its own Christian hope for a new community of harmony and justice for humanity and the world. Therefore, the church which is proclaiming the gospel will support the university which is projecting visions of hope for the future of human life together; for the church's proclamation of hope in Jesus Christ will help to create an ethos within which all proposals for new hope are met with thoughtfulness and appreciation rather than cynicism and despair.

Even more important, insofar as the church becomes the universal community of the people of God committed to justice and freedom for humanity and care for the world, the church will

provide the university with one of its most powerful models for the new community. Therefore, the best thing the church can do to assist the university in its task is to be what it is--the community of hope which hopes for the coming of Christ's Kingdom.

## NOTES

1. One important attempt at a similar discussion was Alexander Miller's Faith and Learning (New York: Association Press, 1960). A chapter in a recent book by John Brubacher also is relevant for this discussion (John S. Brubacher, On the Philosophy of Higher Education /San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1977/, especially Chapter 8).

2. Quirinus Breen, Christianity and Humanism (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1968); L. J. Daly, The Medieval University (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1961); George H. Williams, Wilderness and Paradise in Christian Thought (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954).

3. Williams, 148ff.

4. Williams, 139ff.

5. Williams, 188-189.

6. Quoted in Williams, 167.

7. Williams, 144ff.

8. Williams, 158ff.

9. Williams, 165, 143-144.

10. John Henry Cardinal Newman, The Idea of a University (Garden City: Doubleday, 1959 /Doubleday Image Book/).

11. Walter H. Moberly, The Crisis in the University (London: S.C.M. Press, 1949).

12. Newman, 129.

13. Moberly, 40.

14. William C. DeVane, The American University in the Twentieth Century (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1957).

15. Moberly, 50-70.

16. Clark Kerr, The Uses of the University (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963).

17. Kerr, 16. This, of course, was not absent in Newman's time as is obvious from his vigorous attack on those who would view knowledge as utilitarian.

18. Kerr, 16.

19. It is worth noting that the university without walls is a logical extension of this movement.

20. Kerr, 18.

21. DeVane, 38ff.

22. Cf. Moberly, 50ff.

23. Amitai Etzioni, The Active Society (Paperback edition) (New York: Free Press, 1971), 120ff.

24. James M. Gustafson, "The University as a Community of Moral Discourse," The Journal of Religion, 53, no. 4 (October, 1973): 404.

25. This emphasis on projecting visions of hope will require the university to rethink the relationship of research to promotion and tenure. It will not mean any less emphasis on research but perhaps emphasis on research of a different kind.

26. This is an increasing danger in Britain and elsewhere. Cf. The Chronicle of Higher Education, 15, no. 1 (September 6, 1977): 10.

27. See Julian Hartt's discussion of Christian commitment and a critical life (Julian Hartt, Theology and the Church in the University /Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1969/), 23ff.

28. See T.H. Green, Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation (London: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1937). Green understands the foundations of rights in a social sense.

29. H.D. Aiken, Reason and Conduct (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962), 163; also 166, 104-105.

30. William Ernest Hocking, "Can Values Be Taught?" in The Obligation of Universities to the Social Order (New York: New York University Press, 1933), 332ff.

31. There is a very interesting question here about the role of the theologian in the university which I could pursue, but space does not permit. Some interesting reflections on this question in addition to Julian Hartt's book already referred to are James Gustafson, "What Ought to be the Issue for Religion in American Society in the 1980's?" Chicago Theological Seminary Register, 65, no. 3 (Fall, 1975): 1ff.; Karl Wientraub, "Why Are Divines Impor-

tant to Humanists," Criterion (Spring, 1976): 4ff.; and H. D. Betz, "The Christian Church in the University," Occasional Papers, Methodist Board of Higher Education and Ministry, vol. 1, no. 1.

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